

User Fees Handbook

Directive Number: **1830.6 REV-1**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20410-8000**

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Transmittal: Handbook 1830.6 REV-1
Issued: May 7, 2012

1. This Transmits:

Handbook 1830.6 REV-1, User Fees.

2. Explanation of Changes:

This revision updates the User Fees Handbook to reflect organizational changes at HUD as well as revisions to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance since the Handbook was issued in December 1991. In particular:

- a. References to the Office of Administration have been removed, since the name and function of that Office has changed, and budget formulation is now conducted within the Office of the Chief Financial Officer.
- b. References to the Annual Review of User Fees have been changed to reflect new OMB guidelines requiring a Biennial Review of User Fees.
- c. Appendices and attachments were removed both to reflect changes in the OMB guidance as well as to remove outdated lists of User Fees and examples.

3. Filing Instructions:

Insert: Handbook 1830.6 REV-1, dated May 2012.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1. HUD User Fees and Charges System

1-1 Purpose.....	1-1
1-2 Background.....	1-1
1-3 HUD Policy and Scope	1-2

CHAPTER 2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2-1 General.....	2-1
2-2 Chief Financial Officer	2-1
2-3 Primary Organization Heads (POHs).....	2-1
2-4 Program Comptroller	2-2

CHAPTER 3. ANNUAL REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

3-1 General.....	3-1
3-2 Review Procedures.....	3-1
3-3 Additional Guidance	3-3

Appendices

A-1 OMB Circular No. A-25, User Charges.....	A-1
--	-----

CHAPTER 1. HUD USER FEES AND CHARGES SYSTEM

1-1 Purpose

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide policy and guidance to HUD program managers for implementing and maintaining an equitable and uniform system of user charges in accordance with legislation and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance on user fees.

1-2 Background

A. Legislative Authority. Title V of the Independent Office Appropriations Act of 1952, now codified in 31 U.S.C. 9701, provides the general authority and requirements for User Fees. This legislation, commonly referred to as the User Charge Statute, provides that:

- Government services benefiting individuals be self-sustaining to the extent possible; and
- Fair fees – based on costs, values, public policy, and other relevant facts – be charged for services to recipients.

Specific legislation has been enacted for many of HUD's fees that set amounts or prescribe the basis to be used in establishing fee levels. Also, while the User Charge Statute provides for the deposit of fee income in the Treasury as miscellaneous receipts, HUD program legislation authorizes the use of such income to assist in the funding of authorized appropriation levels for some specific programs.

B. Office of Management and Budget Guidance.

1. OMB Circular A-25, issued September 23, 1959 and revised July 8, 1993 (See Appendix A, especially Section 6, pages A-2 and A-3), contains the following guidance for implementing the User Charge Statute and developing an equitable and uniform system of charges for government services:

- A charge should be imposed when the service: (1) enables the recipient to obtain more immediate or substantial gains or values than those which accrue to the general public; (2) provides business stability or assures public confidence in the business activity of the recipient; or (3) is performed at the recipient's request and is above and beyond the services normally received by other members of the same industry or by the general public;

- If the ultimate recipient is obscure and the service can be construed to benefit the public as a whole, then a charge should not be imposed for the service;
 - To determine costs, the agency should use the best available records and is not required to establish a new and separate cost accounting system for this purpose. The cost of computation must include all direct and indirect costs of providing the service including salaries and other personnel costs, travel, rent, postage, maintenance, operations, and an appropriate share of the agency's general and administrative costs; and
 - The costs of providing the services should be reviewed **biennially** and fees should be adjusted as necessary to recover full costs.
2. OMB Circular A-11 § 20.7 (g) defines a user charge as a fee, charge, or assessment the Government levies on a class of the public directly benefiting from, or subject to regulation by, a Government program or activity. This section also provides a helpful list of inclusions and exclusions, for comparison.
- C. For additional guidance and perspective, see the GAO report, "Federal User Fees – A Design Guide," issued in May 2008 and available on the GAO website at <http://www.gao.gov/assets/210/203357.pdf>.

1-3 **HUD Policy and Scope.**

It is the policy of the Department that a reasonable charge should be assessed to each identifiable recipient for a measurable unit or amount of Government service or property from which the recipient derives a special benefit.

- A. To effectively carry out this policy, managers for the Department's programs are responsible for complying with the general policies contained in the User Charge Statute and OMB Circular A-25, in accordance with Departmental policies established in this Handbook. This will provide a consistent, sound and supportable basis for management decisions regarding user fees.
- B. Many of the Department's programs already incorporate statutory and regulatory provisions for the collection and disposition of fees. This Handbook seeks to clarify program managers' responsibilities for reviewing fee arrangements **biennially**, as a part of the Department's regular budget formulation process.
- C. Program managers should also review new programs in light of the policies contained in this Handbook.

CHAPTER 2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2-1 General

The responsibility for development and administration of a reasonable system of charges and fees consistent with the policies in this handbook primarily rests with program managers. Recognizing that legislative approval and/or OMB concurrence may be necessary before fees can be imposed, program managers are nonetheless responsible for complying with the user fee review requirements outlined in this Handbook for all applicable programs. Certain management officials also have specific responsibilities for ensuring effective oversight and support of the user fee determination process.

2-2 Chief Financial Officer

- A. The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for setting policies and guidelines for maintaining an equitable system of user fee charges for Departmental services meeting the provisions of OMB Circular A-25 and the User Charges Statute. This office will oversee the entire process for user fee charges to ensure that cost effective approaches and schedules of charges are being presented as part of the budget process.
- B. The Office of the Assistant Chief Financial Officer for Budget (ACFO-Budget) is responsible for the preparation of the Departmental budget call which includes guidance for program offices. The budget call for each fiscal year shall include guidance, instructions and other necessary information as well as appropriate schedules for submission of information on user fees. The Office of the ACFO-Budget shall be responsible for providing continuing guidance, information and assistance to Headquarters program managers on technical and procedural matters for user fees, fee receipts and their determination.

2-3 Assistant Secretaries (A/S)

Each A/S and organization head will be responsible for implementing and maintaining a schedule of charges and fees consistent with the policies and guidelines in this Handbook. This involves direction and coordination of the activities of program managers and support staff to accomplish the following requirements:

- A. identifying the services or activities subject to user fee charges;
- B. preparing proposals for new user fees;
- C. performing **biennial** analyses of costs and revenues for user fee services;
- D. making **annual** recommendations to management through the annual budget formulation process on the level of user fee charges which are justifiable, reasonable and reflect sound judgment for cost recovery; and

- E. establishing approved user fees.

2-4 Program Office Budget Director

Each Program Office Budget Director is responsible for:

- A. advising program managers on the reasonableness of the financial basis for determining costs and developing proposals for user fees;
- B. monitoring the user fee review process to ensure compliance with prescribed policies; and
- C. making recommendations for improving the policies covering user fees to the Chief Financial Officer.

CHAPTER 3. BIENNIAL REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

3-1 General

- A. OMB Circular A-25 requires a biennial review of user fees. The Department's annual call for budget estimates and legislative proposals, for each fiscal year provides the opportunity for program managers to propose new user fees or to make changes to existing user fees.
- B. Program managers will review existing fee arrangements and new fee proposals in light of the guidance in this Handbook and develop and submit justifications for changes or new fees. All proposals will be given full consideration during Departmental budget and legislative deliberations prior to submission to OMB.
- C. Program managers should capture data for the computation of user fees from existing management information systems. The review procedures for user fees are not intended to represent a separate and distinct system that is to be maintained by program offices. In those cases where data are not currently available, program managers will be responsible for the development of reasonable, reliable and supportive estimates consistent with the provisions of OMB Circular A-25.

3-2 Review Procedures

The procedure described below will be followed in conducting the review process for user fees.

- A. Issue Instructions for Biennial Review. As part of HUD's annual budget formulation process, the Office of the ACFO-Budget will include instructions for conducting the review of user fees that will identify supporting documentation required on new proposals and changes to existing user fees.
- B. Identify Services Subject to User Fees. Program managers will validate and update the schedule of user fees for services within their program areas.
- C. Determination of Costs and Revenues. Program managers will determine the full costs and receipts for each service subject to user charges for the last complete fiscal year. Accepted cost accounting principles should be applied in the computation or estimation of those costs and collections based on data available from existing Departmental accounting records and management information systems. New cost accounting systems will not be established solely for this purpose. The cost computation shall cover the direct and indirect costs to the Government for carrying out the activity, including but not limited to:
 - 1. salaries, employee leave, travel expenses, rent, cost of fee collection, postage, maintenance, operation and depreciation of buildings and equipment, and

- personnel costs other than direct salaries (e.g., retirement and employee insurance);
2. a proportionate share of the Department's management and supervisory costs; and
 3. the costs of enforcement, research, establishing standards, and regulations, to the extent they are determined by the program manager to be properly chargeable to the activity.
- D. **Determination of Fees to Recover Costs.** Based on comparisons of full costs and fee revenues for each service activity, each program manager should estimate fee levels necessary to recover full costs and propose fees in accordance with policies and procedures. The full cost of providing the service shall be reviewed as part of the budget formulation process every year and fees adjusted to provide full cost recovery. In setting new fees, program managers may propose exceptions to the general policy under such conditions as illustrated below:
1. The incremental cost of collecting the fees would be an unduly large part of the receipts from the activity;
 2. The identification of ultimate beneficiary is obscure and the service can be primarily considered as benefitting the general public;
 3. The recipient is engaged in a nonprofit activity designed for the public safety, health, or welfare; and
 4. Payment of the full fee by a state, local government, or program participant or beneficiary would not be in the interest of the program or consistent with existing business practices or charges.
- E. **Submission of Fee Proposals.** Each A/S will present proposed fee structures for their programs in the annual budget submission. The A/S and organization heads will ensure user fee proposals take into consideration all relevant factors including full costs, public policy, existing program goals and objectives, and legislative constraints. The cumulative assessment of the impact of all costs and user fees for the fiscal year will be taken into consideration when determining the level of appropriation requested. All required documentation, including justification for setting fees at less than full costs, will be included in the budget submission for each program area. Program management should clear all proposals for new fees with General Counsel to ensure consistency with existing law.
- F. **Departmental Review/Approval Process.** The Office of the ACFO-Budget will coordinate the inclusion of user fee proposals as part of the budget submission material to be given full consideration during the Departmental budget and

legislative deliberations. Once approved, budget and program managers will take appropriate actions necessary to implement user fee charges decisions.

- G. **Maintaining a User Fee Schedule.** Each A/S is responsible for maintaining a current User Fee Schedule, along with records including documentation of **biennial** user fee reviews and the basis for determining whether a user fee is to be implemented and the basis for the amount. The Office of the ACFO-Budget will provide a summary report of User Fees, User Fee reviews, disposition of User Fees, and changes made to User Fees for inclusion in the Agency Financial Report, as required by OMB Circular A-25, 8.e and 8.g.

3-3 ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

- A. **Disposition of Receipts.** In general, fees collected are credited to miscellaneous receipts of the Treasury. However, exceptions may be made where:
1. It is intended that a program or a specifically identifiable part of a program be operated on a substantially self-sustaining basis from receipts for services performed or from the sale of products or use of Government-owned resources or property; and
 2. The receipts are in payment of the cost of authorized special benefits for which the demand is irregular or unpredictable such as inspections performed upon request outside the regular duty hours.
- B. **Review Documentation and Budget Submission:** Documentation supporting the cost computations and decisions during the biennial review process should be maintained by POHs including the justification for setting fees at less than full costs.
- C. **Changes in Existing Law:** In cases where collection of fees and charges for services or property in accordance with this Handbook is limited or restricted by provisions of existing law, the Department will submit appropriate remedial legislative proposals to OMB, as part of the regular budget cycle. Program offices should work with their budget office and/or General Deputy Assistant Secretary to initiate a legislative proposal.
- D. **Calculation of General and Administrative Expense Rate (Overhead).** As part of the calculation of costs for providing the services covered by this Handbook, program offices are to include an allocation of program overhead. In addition, Departmental overhead will be included through estimation of an overhead cost rate for the Department. The Departmental overhead cost rate will be based on total salary and expense obligations incurred for each major organization as reported on the Distribution of Obligations by Budget Activity in the Congressional Justification. Total obligations reported for HUD's major programs (the Office of Housing, GNMA, CPD, PIH, FHEO, OHHLHC, and any other operating

organizations with direct programmatic responsibilities) will be classified as the overhead allocation base. The obligations reported for the remaining offices, such as General Counsel, OCHCO, OCPO, OCIO, OCFO, and staff support, etc., will be classified as the overhead pool. The overhead cost rate will be calculated by dividing the overhead pool by the allocation base.

- E. Preparation of Cost Proposals for New User Fees. In the establishment of new Federal activities which would provide special benefits, affected program offices are to apply the policies and criteria set forth in this Handbook for all user fees.
- F. Determination of “No User Fee.” In those cases where the identification of the ultimate beneficiary is obscure and the service can be primarily considered as benefitting broadly the general public, no user charge should be made. Program managers shall prepare documentation which supports the determination and is approved by the Assistant Secretary.

APPENDIX A

OMB Circular No. A-25
Revised July 8, 1993

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

SUBJECT: User charges

1. **Purpose:** The Circular establishes Federal policy regarding fees assessed for Government services and for sale or use of Government goods or resources. It provides information on the scope and types of activities subject to user charges and on the basis upon which user charges are to be set. Finally, it provides guidance for agency implementation of charges and the disposition of collections.
2. **Rescission:** This rescinds Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A-25, dated September 23, 1959, and Transmittal Memoranda 1 and 2.
3. **Authority:** Title V of the Independent Offices Appropriations Act of 1952 (31 U.S.C. 9701); 31 U.S.C. 1111; and Executive Orders No. 8248 and No. 11541.
4. **Coverage:**
 - a. The provisions of this Circular cover all Federal activities that convey special benefits to recipients beyond those accruing to the general public. The Circular does not apply to the activities of the legislative and judicial branches of Government, or to mixed-ownership Government corporations, as defined in 31 U.S.C. 9701.
 - b. The provisions of the Circular shall be applied by agencies in their assessment of user charges under the IOAA. In addition, this Circular provides guidance to agencies regarding their assessment of user charges under other statutes. This guidance is intended to be applied only to the extent permitted by law. Thus, where a statute prohibits the assessment of a user charge on a service or addresses an aspect of the user charge (e.g., who pays the charge; how much is the charge; where collections are deposited), the statute shall take precedence over the Circular. In such cases (e.g., sale or disposal under Federal surplus property statutes; or fringe benefits for military personnel and civilian employees), the guidance provided by the Circular would apply to the extent that it is not inconsistent with the statute. The same analysis would apply with regard to executive orders that address user charges.
 - c. In any case where an Office of Management and Budget circular provides guidance concerning a specific user charge area, the guidance of that circular shall be deemed to meet the requirements of this Circular. Examples of such guidance include the following: OMB Circular No. A-45, concerning charges for rental quarters; OMB Circular No. A-130, concerning management of Federal information resources; and OMB Circular No. A-97, concerning provision of specialized technical services to State and Local governments.

5. **Objectives:** It is the objective of the United States Government to:
- a. ensure that each service, sale, or use of Government goods or resources provided by an agency to specific recipients be self-sustaining;
 - b. promote efficient allocation of the Nation's resources by establishing charges for special benefits provided to the recipient that are at least as great as costs to the Government of providing the special benefits; and
 - c. allow the private sector to compete with the Government without disadvantage in supplying comparable services, resources, or goods where appropriate.
6. **General policy:** A user charge, as described below, will be assessed against each identifiable recipient for special benefits derived from Federal activities beyond those received by the general public. When the imposition of user charges is prohibited or restricted by existing law, agencies will review activities periodically and recommend legislative changes when appropriate. Section 7 gives guidance on drafting legislation to implement user charges.
- a. Special benefits
 1. Determining when special benefits exist. When a service (or privilege) provides special benefits to an identifiable recipient beyond those that accrue to the general public, a charge will be imposed (to recover the full cost to the Federal Government for providing the special benefit, or the market price). For example, a special benefit will be considered to accrue and a user charge will be imposed when a Government service:
 - (a) enables the beneficiary to obtain more immediate or substantial gains or values (which may or may not be measurable in monetary terms) than those that accrue to the general public (e.g., receiving a patent, insurance, or guarantee provision, or a license to carry on a specific activity or business or various kinds of public land use); or
 - (b) provides business stability or contributes to public confidence in the business activity of the beneficiary (e.g., insuring deposits in commercial banks); or
 - (c) is performed at the request of or for the convenience of the recipient, and is beyond the services regularly received by other members of the same industry or group or by the general public (e.g., receiving a passport, visa, airman's certificate, or a Custom's inspection after regular duty hours).
 2. Determining the amount of user charges to assess.
 - (a) Except as provided in Section 6c, user charges will be sufficient to recover the full cost to the Federal Government (as defined in Section 6d) of providing the service, resource, or good when the Government is acting in its capacity as sovereign.
 - (b) Except as provided in Section 6c, user charges will be based on market prices (as defined in Section 6d) when the Government, not acting in its capacity as sovereign, is leasing or selling goods or resources, or is providing a service (e.g., leasing space in

federally owned buildings). Under these business-type conditions, user charges need not be limited to the recovery of full cost and may yield net revenues.

(c) User charges will be collected in advance of, or simultaneously with, the rendering of services unless appropriations and authority are provided in advance to allow reimbursable services.

(d) Whenever possible, charges should be set as rates rather than fixed dollar amounts in order to adjust for changes in costs to the Government or changes in market prices of the good, resource, or service provided (as defined in Section 6d).

3. In cases where the Government is supplying services, goods, or resources that provide a special benefit to an identifiable recipient and that also provide a benefit to the general public, charges should be set in accordance with paragraph (2) of Section 6a. Therefore, when the public obtains benefits as a necessary consequence of an agency's provision of special benefits to an identifiable recipient (i.e., the public benefits are not independent of, but merely incidental to, the special benefits), an agency need not allocate any costs to the public and should seek to recover from the identifiable recipient either the full cost to the Federal Government of providing the special benefit or the market price, whichever applies.
4. No charge should be made for a service when the identification of the specific beneficiary is obscure, and the service can be considered primarily as benefiting broadly the general public.

b. Charges to the direct recipient. Charges will be made to the direct recipient of the special benefit even though all or part of the special benefits may then be passed to others.

c. Exceptions

1. Agency heads or their designee may make exceptions to the general policy if the provision of a free service is an appropriate courtesy to a foreign government or international organization; or comparable fees are set on a reciprocal basis with a foreign country.
2. Agency heads or their designee may recommend to the Office of Management and Budget that exceptions to the general policy be made when:
 - (a) the cost of collecting the fees would represent an unduly large part of the fee for the activity; or
 - (b) any other condition exists that, in the opinion of the agency head or his designee, justifies an exception.
3. All exceptions shall be for a period of no more than four years unless renewed by the agency heads or their designee for exceptions granted under Section 6c(1) or the Office

of Management and Budget for exceptions granted under Section 6c(2) after a review to determine whether conditions warrant their continuation.

4. Requests for exceptions and extensions under paragraphs (2) and (3) of Section 6c shall be submitted to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

d. Determining full cost and market price

1. "Full cost" includes all direct and indirect costs to any part of the Federal Government of providing a good, resource, or service. These costs include, but are not limited to, an appropriate share of:

(a) Direct and indirect personnel costs, including salaries and fringe benefits such as medical insurance and retirement. Retirement costs should include all (funded or unfunded) accrued costs not covered by employee contributions as specified in Circular No. A-11.

(b) Physical overhead, consulting, and other indirect costs including material and supply costs, utilities, insurance, travel, and rents or imputed rents on land, buildings, and equipment. If imputed rental costs are applied, they should include:

(i) depreciation of structures and equipment, based on official Internal Revenue Service depreciation guidelines unless better estimates are available; and

(ii) an annual rate of return (equal to the average long-term Treasury bond rate) on land, structures, equipment and other capital resources used.

(c) The management and supervisory costs.

(d) The costs of enforcement, collection, research, establishment of standards, and regulation, including any required environmental impact statements.

(e) Full cost shall be determined or estimated from the best available records of the agency, and new cost accounting systems need not be established solely for this purpose.

2. "Market price" means the price for a good, resource, or service that is based on competition in open markets, and creates neither a shortage nor a surplus of the good, resource, or service.

(a) When a substantial competitive demand exists for a good, resource, or service, its market price will be determined using commercial practices, for example:

(i) by competitive bidding; or

(ii) by reference to prevailing prices in competitive markets for goods, resources, or services that are the same or similar to those provided by the Government (e.g., campsites or grazing lands in the general vicinity of private ones) with adjustments as appropriate that reflect demand, level of service, and quality of the good or service.

(b) In the absence of substantial competitive demand, market price will be determined by taking into account the prevailing prices for goods, resources, or services that are the same or substantially similar to those provided by the Government, and then adjusting the supply made available and/or price of the good, resource, or service so that there will be neither a shortage nor a surplus (e.g., campsites in remote areas).

7. Implementation:

a. The general policy is that user charges will be instituted through the promulgation of regulations.

b. When there are statutory prohibitions or limitations on charges, legislation to permit charges to be established should be proposed. In general, legislation should seek to remove restraints on user charges and permit their establishment under the guidelines provided in this Circular. When passage of this general authority seems unlikely, more restrictive authority should be sought. The level of charges proposed should be based on the guidelines in Section 6. When necessary, legislation should:

1. define in general terms the services for which charges will be assessed and the pricing mechanism that will be used;
2. specify fees will be collected in advance of, or simultaneously with, the provision of service unless appropriations and authority are provided in advance to allow reimbursable services;
3. specify where collections will be credited (see Section 9). Legislative proposals should not normally specify precise charges. The user charge schedule should be set by regulation. This will allow administrative updating of fees to reflect changing costs and market values. Where it is not considered feasible to collect charges at a level specified in Section 6, charges should be set as close to that level as is practical.

c. Excise taxes are another means of charging specific beneficiaries for the Government services they receive. New user charges should not be proposed in cases where an excise tax currently finances the Government services that benefit specific individuals. Agencies may consider proposing a new excise tax when it would be significantly cheaper to administer than fees, and the burden of the excise tax would rest almost entirely on the user population (e.g., gasoline tax to finance highway construction). Excise taxes cannot be imposed through administrative action but rather require legislation. Legislation should meet the same criteria as in Section 7b; however, it is necessary to state explicitly the rate of the tax. Agency review of these taxes must be performed periodically and new legislation should be proposed, as appropriate, to update the tax based on changes in cost. Any excise tax proposals must be approved by the Assistant Secretary for Tax Policy at the Department of the Treasury.

d. When developing options to institute user charges administratively, agencies should review all sources of statutory authority in addition to the Independent Offices Appropriations Act that may authorize implementation of such charges.

e. In proposing new charges or modifications to existing ones, managers of other programs that provide special benefits to the same or similar user populations should be consulted. Joint legislative proposals should be made, and joint collection efforts designed to ease the burden on the users should be used, whenever possible.

f. Every effort should be made to keep the costs of collection to a minimum. The principles embodied in Circular No. A-76 (Performance of Commercial Activities) should be considered in designing the collection effort.

g. Legislative proposals must be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget in accordance with the requirements of Circular No. A-19. To ensure the proper placement of user fee initiatives in the budget account structure, agencies are encouraged to discuss proposals with OMB at an early stage of development.

8. Agency responsibility: Agencies are responsible for the initiation and adoption of user charge schedules consistent with the policies in this Circular. Each agency will:

a. Identify the services and activities covered by this Circular;

b. Determine the extent of the special benefits provided;

c. Apply the principles specified in Section 6 in determining full cost or market price, as appropriate;

d. Apply the guidance in Section 7 either to institute charges through the promulgation of regulations or submit legislation as appropriate;

e. Review the user charges for agency programs biennially, to include: (1) assurance that existing charges are adjusted to reflect unanticipated changes in costs or market values; and (2) a review of all other agency programs to determine whether fees should be assessed for Government services or the user of Government goods or services. Agencies should discuss the results of the biennial review of user fees and any resultant proposals in the Chief Financial Officers Annual Report required by the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990;

f. Ensure that the requirements of OMB Circular No. A-123 (Internal Control Systems) and appropriate audit standards are applied to collection;

g. Maintain readily accessible records of:

- the services or activities covered by this Circular;
- the extent of special benefits provided;
- the exceptions to the general policy of this Circular;

- the information used to establish charges and the specific method(s) used to determine them; and
- the collections from each user charge imposed.
- Maintain adequate records of the information used to establish charges and provide them upon request to OMB for the evaluation of the schedules and provide data on user charges to OMB in accordance with the requirements in Circular No. A-11.

9. **Disposition of collections:**

- a. Unless a statute provides otherwise, user charge collections will be credited to the general fund of the Treasury as miscellaneous receipts, as required by 31 U.S.C. 3302.
- b. Legislative proposals to permit the collections to be retained by the agency may be appropriate in certain circumstances. Proposals should meet the guidelines in Section 7b.

Proposals that allow agency retention of collections may be appropriate when a fee is levied in order to finance a service that is intended to be provided on a substantially self-sustaining basis and thus is dependent upon adequate collections.

1. Generally, the authority to use fees credited to an agency's appropriations should be subject to limits set in annual appropriations language. However, it may be appropriate to request exemption from annual appropriations control, if provision of the service is dependent on demand that is irregular or unpredictable (e.g., a fee to reimburse an agency for the cost of overtime pay of inspectors for services performed after regular duty hours).
2. As a normal rule, legislative proposals that permit fees to be credited to accounts should also be consistent with the full-cost recovery guidelines contained in this Circular. Any fees in excess of full-cost recovery and any increase in fees to recover the portion of retirement costs which recoups all (funded or unfunded) accrual costs not covered by employee contributions should be credited to the general fund of the Treasury as miscellaneous receipts.

10. **New activities:** Whenever agencies prepare legislative proposals for new or expanded Federal activities that would provide special benefits, the policies and criteria set forth in this Circular will apply.

11. **Inquiries:** For information concerning this Circular, consult the Office of Management and Budget examiner responsible for the agency's budget estimates.